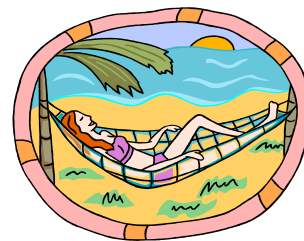


The Truth About Tanning

Across the country, millions of teens are counting down the minutes until summer vacation. You're ready to take a splash in the pool, hit the beach, or just soak up some rays in your own backyard. But before you grab your shades and beach towel, you should spend a few minutes finding out more about your skin and the harmful effects of too much sun exposure.

Nearly 75% of young people report getting sunburns during the summer months, and of those, more than one-third reported using a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher when they burned. What most teens don't realize is that their hours of baking in the sun in pursuit of the perfect golden tan are merely setting the stage for premature wrinkles and skin cancer later in life.

The sun's rays contain two types of ultraviolet radiation that reach your skin. UVB radiation burns the upper layers of skin, known as the epidermis, causing sunburns. UVA radiation, which actually penetrates the lower layers (known as the dermis), cause tanning. UVA rays are considered the culprit in the aging of skin, and UVB rays are more often linked to skin cancer. In other words, a tan is merely visible proof that your skin has been damaged.



Nothing lifts your mood like a sunny day, and when sunlight hits your skin, it makes vitamin D, which is essential for strong bones and teeth. It's important to get outside and be active to avoid putting on those unnecessary pounds over the summer months. But, the best way to care for your skin is to find a balance between activity and protection.

Here are some helpful tips to keep in mind:

- Wear sunscreen with a SPF (sun protector factor) of at least 15 on a daily basis.
- Make sure sunscreen blocks both UVA and UVB rays. Ideally, your sunscreen should also be hypoallergenic and noncomedogenic so it doesn't cause a rash or clog your pores and give you acne.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 to 3 hours and after swimming or sweating, and make sure it's waterproof and sweatproof.
- Wear sunscreen with a higher SPF if you're in direct sunlight.
- The sun's rays are strongest between 10am and 4pm, so take frequent breaks during these hours or avoid sun exposure during these times all together.
- Wear a hat with a brim and sunglasses to protect your eyes from UV rays.
- Be aware of reflective surfaces like water that can increase the amount of UV radiation to which your skin is exposed.
- Use fake tanners. Many salons are offering airbrush tans, or you can use self-tanners to give you a golden tan without all the risks.
- Tanning beds are not a safe alternative. They use higher concentrations of UV light, so in the long run, you absorb far more rays, significantly age your skin, and put yourself at an even greater risk for skin cancer.

Enjoy your summer vacation, and use these sun safety tips to protect yourself.

How To Take Risks, Have Fun, and Still Be Safe

We look so forward to our summer vacation...no books, no homework, no late nights cramming for tests. And yet every year, teens all across the nation ruin their summer by making poor decisions and taking unnecessary risks.

Taking a risk means doing something when you don't know how it will turn out. Risks can be positive, and they can help you have fun or learn about yourself. But, unhealthy risks can have serious, even life-threatening consequences.

Here are a few things to keep in mind before accepting that dare, taking that chance, or shouting to your friends or family, "Hey ya'll, watch this!"

1. Positive Risks Can Help You Grow

- Positive risks include things like: trying something new like learning to rock climb or roller blade, making a new friend or asking someone out on a date, starting a band or trying out for a part in a play, or applying for a job or to college.

2. Unhealthy Risks Can Lead to Trouble

- Unhealthy risks include things like: drinking and driving, stealing, or fighting or engaging in a violent crime

3. Before You Take a Risk...

- Ask yourself, "What's in it for me? What positive things might happen?"
- Look at what could go wrong too. Ask yourself, "Could I get hurt? Could someone else get hurt?"

4. Pay Attention To Your Instincts

- Listen to that voice inside that tells you if something isn't right.
- Everyone is different. Only you can decide if a risk is right for you.



5. When Should You Go For It?

- Risks that are worth taking are risks that: might lead to something that you value or think is positive for you, help you grow emotionally or physically, won't hurt anyone - including you, and make you feel good about yourself.

6. Don't Fall Into The "It Won't Happen To Me" Trap

- Think bad things won't happen to you - think again.
- The leading causes of death for young people - car crashes, accidents, HIV and violent crimes - are often the result of taking unhealthy risks.
- Thinking, "It won't happen to me," will keep you from taking control of your life.

7. Stand Up To Pressure

- If you're not sure about taking a risk, or you think the possible consequences are too high, it's better to say, "No thanks."

- Don't let others tell you that a risk isn't real.

8. Alcohol And Other Drugs Are Not Worth The Risk

- The possible consequences - such as illness, overdose, or addiction - are just too high.
- Violent crimes, date rape and car crashes are all more likely to happen if you have been drinking or using drugs.
- Alcohol and drugs affect judgment.

9. Get Help If You're Taking Unhealthy Risks

- If you find that you're taking unhealthy risks on a regular basis, it could be a sign of deeper problems.
- Talk with a trusted friend, family member, counselor or healthcare provider.

Keep these things in mind before taking risks. Stay safe, and don't let a bad decision ruin your summer vacation!

Totally Teens would like to congratulate all of this year's graduates. Best of luck for a happy, healthy future.



Way to Go Class of 2005!

Water Works

We all know the importance of a well-balanced diet to our overall health and well-being, but we sometimes forget the other critical element of sound nutrition - water. The body's need for water is second in importance only to its need for oxygen. During intense activity or heat, the body can lose up to two liters of water as sweat. The following recommendations can help ensure that your body has enough water to keep you working in top condition:

- Drink 8 to 10 8-ounce glasses of water or fluids daily
- Start drinking before you feel thirsty
- Use water to cool your skin during activity
- Wear light, loose, porous clothing in hot weather to help sweat evaporate
- Weigh yourself before and after activity, and replace the water you've lost with cool fluids
- Don't count on thirst as an accurate guide to your water needs. You'll quench your thirst long before you replenish your body supply.

Enjoy those summer activities, and remember to stay hydrated for peak performance.

A cartoon illustration of a boy with short dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and pants, standing with his arms crossed. He is next to a large, spiral-bound notepad. The notepad has a large 'Rx' symbol in the top left corner. The text on the notepad is as follows:

Got the Summer Blues...

Wanna be a part of a group of your peers who are interested in making a difference in the community?

Join the Totally Teens "Teen" Advisory Board. We meet once a month to discuss the latest issues affecting teens and how we can make an impact.

Come join us for some food, fun and make some new friends!

Contact Candice Justice at (828)695-5862 for more information.